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America's First Subway

[Inside the T](#) [Traveling on the T](#) [Projects Under Way](#) [Doing Business with the T](#) [Contact Us](#)
[Site Map](#) | [Search](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Transit Links](#)
[Inside the T](#)
[From the Secretary](#)
[From the GM](#)
[T at a Glance](#)
[MBTA News/Events](#)
[Police](#)
[Career Opportunities](#)
[Investor Relations](#)
[Audited Financial Statements](#)
[Capital Investment Program](#)
[Budget Information](#)
[Environmental](#)
[Service Plan](#)
[Photos & Arts](#)
[Transit Updates](#)
[Schedules, Maps & Station Info](#)
[Passes, Programs & Fares](#)
[Quick Links:](#)
[Subway Map](#)
[Commuter Rail Map](#)
[Inside the T](#) > [MBTA News / Events](#)

MBTA News/Events

MBTA Continues To Make Customer Safety Its #1 Priority

Release Date: 7/12/2004 E-Mail: jpesaturo@mbta.com

Continuing its determined efforts to keep the nation's fifth busiest transit system safe and secure, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has announced that random security inspections of bags, parcels, and other carry-on items will begin prior to the start of the Democratic National Convention. In order to inform its customers of the Security Screening Program, the MBTA and its Police Department have launched a public education campaign involving hand-outs, signage, press releases, media interviews, and website information.



General Manager Michael Mulhern speaks at a training session for customer service agents who will be deployed throughout the transit system during the DNC. Seated are MBTA Police Chief Joseph Carter and Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas

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"The terrorist attacks on New York, Washington, and Madrid are foremost on our minds as Boston plays an integral and highly symbolic role in the democratic process of choosing a president," said Transportation Secretary Daniel A. Grabauskas. "MBTA Police, who met with civil rights groups and community members, have developed a policy rooted in the fundamental principles of fairness and equality."

"This is not a step to which we arrived at hastily," said MBTA General Manager Michael H. Mulhern. "The MBTA would not be moving forward with this security initiative unless I felt it was absolutely necessary in this city and during this time in our nation's history."

The public information campaign is an extension of the Transit Watch program through which customers are urged to report suspicious activity or unattended packages.

The early statistics are encouraging. Phone calls to MBTA Police jumped from 76 in April to 125 in May. In June, the number was 99.

"The numbers clearly demonstrate that a lot of people are willing to play an active part in making their transit system as safe as possible," said MBTA Police Chief Joseph C. Carter. "With this level of dynamic support for our Transit Watch initiative, 'See Something, Say Something,' I am convinced that riders, police, and T employees can make all the difference in deterring and preventing terrorism on the MBTA."

Under the new Security Screening Program, all persons choosing to use MBTA services will be subject to inspection of his/her handbags, briefcases, and/or other carry-on items. The brief baggage checks will involve the use of electronic equipment, explosive detection K-9s, and/or visual inspections.

Any person who does not wish to participate in the screening process will not be permitted to enter the transit system. It's also important that customers be aware of minor delays that may result due to these security measures. To keep the MBTA's security plans as effective as possible, the times and locations of screening checkpoints will not be announced in advance.

"The public's patience and cooperation during the Security Screening Program will be greatly appreciated," said Mulhern. "After the convention, law enforcement and transportation officials will meet to discuss public safety policies, and chart a course for the future."

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 BACK

[Inside the T](#) | [Traveling on the T](#) | [Projects Underway](#) | [Doing Business with the T](#)
[Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Transit Links](#) | [Visiting Boston](#) | [Home](#)

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